

Appl. No. 10/791,533
Art Unit: 2854
Response to Office Action
Mailed October 15, 2005
Attorney Docket No.: 26047

REMARKS

The Examiner's objections have been carefully noted and his acknowledgment that original claims 4 to 6 recited allowable subject matter is appreciated.

Claims 1 to 6 have been canceled and a new set of claims substituted therefor, which in Applicant's view better distinguishes the invention over cited U.S. Patent No. 6,469,500 (Schmitz).

On further reviewing the original claims, it is believed that they do not properly reflect the scope of the invention for which protection is sought. The invention resides essentially in a short-circuit detector having a releasable clamp that allows an electrically conductive probe pin to effect and maintain electrical contact with one contact of a pair of contacts across which a short circuit may be measured. The short-circuit detector further comprises a mechanism that biases the probe pin toward the contact in the probed area and maintains the contact for a short duration even after the probe body is displaced away from the probed area. This *desideratum* is achieved by virtue of the fact of the mechanism allows for a certain amount of play, referred to as "detection distance" so that the clamp maintains its hold until the probe body is displaced the detection distance away from the probed area; and only then does the mechanism engage so that further displacement causes the probe body together with the pin to disengage from the probed area, and in doing so to overcome the clamping force of the releasable clamp.

It is respectfully submitted that no such mechanism is suggested by Schmitz. The Examiner suggests that the spring plate 25 shown in Fig. 3 of Schmitz is analogous to the stoppage means 85 described and claimed in the present application. This objection is respectfully traversed. The spring plate 25 in Schmitz serves merely to support the restoring spring 26: it does not allow limited displacement of the guide pin 23 relative to the housing until the spring

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plate 25 engages a cavity of the housing, so that subsequent displacement of the housing relative to a probed area causes withdrawal of the guide pin 23 away from the probed area.

In the new claims, claim 7 recites the above functionality and is therefore believed to be patentable over Schmitz. Claim 8 defines the mechanism in greater detail and claim 9, dependent on claim 8 adds the further limitation that the releasable clamp is magnetic. It is submitted that once the functionality of the magnet is appreciated, namely to serve as a rigid mount that may withhold vibrations or movements as described in the paragraph beginning on page 7, line 13, it will readily be appreciated by one of average skill that the same functionality can be realized using other types of releasable clamp. For example suction can be used to achieve the same effect, since it will exert a pulling or clamping force that overcomes any frictional pull in the opposite direction cause by the initial motion of probe body being withdrawn. Thus, the probe body is able to effect limited displacement relative to the probed area until the limited device engages the stoppage step, whereupon further displacement of the housing will displace also the probe pin and overcome the clamping force.

New claim 19 is of substantially identical scope of original claim 4, which the Examiner acknowledged as containing allowable subject matter. Therefore it is believed that claims 19, 20 and 21 are allowable.

Other amendments are requested to the description as noted, by way of clarification or correction of obvious errors. No new matter is thereby added.

In view of the foregoing, favorable reconsideration is solicited.

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CONCLUSION

In light of the foregoing, Applicant submits that the application is now in condition for allowance. If the Examiner believes the application is not in condition for allowance, Applicant respectfully requests that the Examiner contact the undersigned attorney if it is believed that such contact will expedite the prosecution of the application.

In the event this paper is not timely filed, Applicant petitions for an appropriate extension of time. Please charge any fee deficiency or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No. 14-0112.

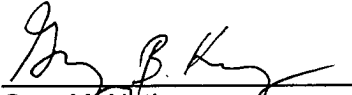
Respectfully submitted,

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